

Georgia's Workforce Leadership Association
Saturday, July 28, 2007
Hampton Inn, Bay Street
Savannah, Georgia

Minutes

Georgia's Workforce Leadership Association met on Saturday, July 28, 2007 at the Hampton in Inn Savannah, Georgia

. Members in attendance were as follows:

Area	WIB Chair/Designee	WIB Director/Designee	City/Location
1	Butch Jones	Gwen Dellinger	Northwest Georgia
2			Georgia Mountains
3			City of Atlanta
4	Pam Teague	John Helton	Cobb County
5	Delores Crowell	Roberta Morris	Dekalb County
6	Carlton Burroughs	Burrell Billingslea	Fulton County
7	Randy Hayes	Mary Margaret Garrett	Atlanta Regional
8			West Central Georgia
9	Amrey Harden	Carol Rayburn	Northeast Georgia
10	Lamar Geddis	Lori Howard	Macon-Bibb
11	Dan Stone	Don McRae	Middle Georgia
12	Pauline Jenkins	Jackie Dunn	Richmond/Burke
13	Ken Williams	Butch Barton	East Central Georgia
14		Howard Pendleton	Lower Chattahoochee
15	Lillian Flynt	Janice West	Middle Flint
16			Heart of Georgia
17			Southwest Georgia
18			South Georgia
19			Southeast Georgia
20	Vickie Cook	Cindy Landolt	Coastal

The following guests were in attendance:

Linda Johnson, Georgia Department of Labor
Debra Lyons, Governor's Office of Workforce Development

Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Butch Jones. Chairman Jones welcomed everyone and thanked everyone for their participation. Introductions were made around the room.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the Georgia Workforce Leadership Association meeting held, at Lake Blackshear Resort and Golf Club, in

Cordele, Georgia, on March 9, 2007. There were no opposing votes and the motion carried by voice vote.

Committee Reports

Executive Committee - Chairman Jones reported that there was not an Executive Committee meeting held and turned the floor over to Carlton Burroughs to present the financial report.

Finance Report – Carlton Burroughs announced that the Budget Committee met and developed a budget process flowchart and compiled the budget for next year as presented in today’s handout. With a projection of funds dropping below \$2,000 by year end, it was the consensus of the committee members to recommend gathering another round of membership dues and to start a cycle of collecting dues bi-annually. It was suggested to the committee to amend the budget by adding a miscellaneous category where the annual costs associated with the Aray Darden Award could be included. After mathematical errors were found the proposed budget was amended as follows (see attached amended budget proposal):

Available funds: \$6,100
Projected Expenses: \$4,450
Remaining Balance: \$1,650

A motion was made and seconded to approve the acceptance of the proposed budget as amended. There were no opposing votes and the motion carried by voice vote.

Treasury Report – Carlton Burroughs reported that as of July 4, 2007 the balance was \$6,615.84 and reflects transactions that have taken place since the last meeting where the balance was reported as \$7,468.03. There are a couple of transactions still pending for expenses related to the Lake Blackshear meeting.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the treasury report as presented. There were no opposing votes and the motion carried by voice vote.

Legislative/Communication – Acting Chairman Amrey Harden reported there were three items up for discussion – Federal Funding, WIA Reauthorization Status and GWLA Board Orientation

Federal Funding Status - As was decided at the last GWLA meeting, GWLA Chair Butch Jones reported that he has sent letters to House and Senate leadership promoting adequate funding for WIA.

The committee discussed the status of Federal funding. Both the U.S. Senate and House Appropriations Committees have approved the same funding levels for FY 2008 as FY 2006 and 2007 for the major WIA grant programs. The full House has also acted to approve these levels, but with the provision to rescind \$335 million from PY 2005 and 2006 funds.

The Workforce Alliance developed estimates of the amounts that could be rescinded by State out of the \$335 million, and the amount for Georgia was over \$7 million, equating to 2,806 people losing WIA services. Expenditure data from the U.S. Department of Labor's website shows that Georgia's combined spending rate for PY 2005 (which does not include obligations) was 69.2%, while the nationwide rate was 72.6%. Georgia had no expired funds from previous years under current rules, while the nationwide amount of expired funds was only \$6.3 million. The premise of rescission proponents is that the definition of an acceptable spending rate under current rules is too generous.

After some discussion, the committee concluded that the GWLA should try to get up-to-date information on spending rates for Georgia at State and local levels before expressing its concerns regarding the proposed rescission. The committee would also like to consult State officials on this issue.

WIA Reauthorization Status - Progress has been slow in both houses of Congress on reauthorization. However, the Bush administration has submitted a new version of its proposal in April, and the House has just begun committee hearings. Speculation on a Senate bill is that it will be next year before one is developed. The committee reviewed the GWLA's position paper on WIA reauthorization in light of new issues raised and recommends the following additions to the GWLA's position:

1. Funds for supportive services, assessment, case management, counseling, placement and follow-up should be preserved and recognized as vitally important in assisting trainees to succeed in training and to attain their career goals. Coordinated assistance from other agencies and programs is already utilized by local support systems but is wholly insufficient to meet trainees' needs.
2. Responsibilities of the State Board should be expanded to include;
In consultation with Local Workforce Investment Boards, development and review of statewide policies for the One-Stop Career Center system, including:
 - Strategies to support and promote the workforce development efforts of local boards,
 - Strategies for effective interagency coordination of One-Stop partners at the State and Federal level.
3. Inter-fund Transfers – If funds are not consolidated, there should be increased flexibility at the local level in transferring funds between Adult and Dislocated Worker funding streams. The unpredictability of lay-off events and need for quick action justifies this flexibility, while knowledge of these needs is a local workforce board specialty.
4. Local Board Involvement in Federal and State Initiatives – Provisions should be included that ensure Local Board involvement in Federal and State workforce development initiatives occurring in local areas. Examples of these initiatives include pilot, demonstration and other such activities having local

scope and focus. Too often in the past, these initiatives have contributed to fragmented and uncoordinated workforce development activities, a problem frequently cited as weakness in the current system. Local Workforce Investment Board oversight is the best insurance that funds will be used to advance workforce development in local labor markets.

Board Orientation - The committee previewed and approved a slide show to be used for the new GWLA board member orientation sessions. Plans are to offer a one hour orientation prior to each GWLA meeting. Howard Pendleton is preparing the materials and will arrange for the sessions to be conducted.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the Legislative and Communications committee report as presented. There were no opposing votes and the motion carried by voice vote.

Members were asked to supply their email addresses if they would like to receive a copy of the position paper. Don will email it to all that are interested.

Workforce Development – Dan Stone reported the following items were discussed:

Georgia Workforce Ready Initiative - Debra Lyons, from the Governor's Office of Workforce Development, conducted a presentation regarding program current status and updates related to new activities. The following items were presented:

- Governor Perdue announced today that 24 counties were selected as demo counties to each receive \$35,000 grants to assist in accelerating the process of earning Certified Work Ready status.
- 73 counties have sent in letters of intent to achieve Certified Work Ready Communities.
- The new website that will provide the current number of assessments by county will be online in the next few months.
- The 73 counties currently in the program have been grouped into 10 working regions.
- There will be a competition for grant monies by the regions to be used within the Certified Work Ready program. Selection for the grants will be largely based on the number profiles and assessments conducted by the regions.
- Governor's Office of Workforce Development will be conducting two workshops, Warner Robins August 14 and Atlanta August 16, to further explain the Work Ready Program.

State Workforce Board Strategic Plan - Gwen Dellinger led a discussion related to how the local WIA Board activities might fit into the state strategic plan and goals. The discussion centered on trying to chose several items, maybe 1 to 3, which all WIA Boards across the state could work on collectively to achieve one or more of the State Workforce Board goals. The committee concluded that this was a good ideal and the Directors need to develop a possible list of items for future consideration.

Update on Citizen Discussion Forms Final Report - Due to a lack of time, the committee was not able to have any discussion on the report.

A motion was made to accept the Workforce Development committee report as presented. There were no opposing votes and the motion carried by voice vote.

Georgia Department of Labor Update

Linda Johnson attended for Commissioner Thurmond and conveyed his regrets for not being able to attend today's meeting. He hopes to be able to attend future meetings and he is committed to participating. She reported on the Georgia Department of Labor's activities as follows:

Funding - WIA Funding for PY '07 has been received. The State of Georgia received \$76,559,903 in WIA Funds for Adult, Dislocated Workers and Youth programs, which is an increase over PY '06 funding. Unfortunately, Georgia's unemployment rate was higher than the national average and helped in terms of getting additional funds. Adult and Youth formula funds were increased by 30% and Dislocated Worker formula funds were increased by 12% over 2006. The amount distributed to local areas was \$56,874,327.

Notices of Obligations (NOO) were received last week. All areas should have received communication from the Grants and Contracts Department this week relative to their grant awards, which are the July allocations. Areas should receive additional allocations in October.

Reauthorization – No Bill has been passed yet. There is some discussion as to whether or not anything will be passed during this session. The President has put another proposal out for their proposal for reauthorization. Most energy has been focused on the reauthorization of Trade and it is likely to be passed before WIA.

Rescission – Any “un-obligated” funds for PY '05-'06 are at risk. If they are obligated it won't be a problem. The way the proposed legislation is written is related to specifically un-obligated funds. The Department is in the midst of an Employment and Training Federal review and there are a couple of areas that have un-obligated funds, however, there is another year to spend the money but the requirement of the 70% and the desire to obligate the funds is what the areas need to pay attention to.

Plan Updates – The State Plan has been completed and is available on the Department's website. Areas did an excellent job on their local plans and feedback should be received next week as far as the Department's acceptance. The three WIRED proposals that went forward were not approved and Emily De Rocco said they will work with proposals not approved.

Unemployment Rate – The unemployment rate is currently 4.7% and is in line with the U.S. Unemployment Rate.

Performance - The State is doing really well on performance. Due to the excellent job being done by all areas, Georgia has exceeded the regional and national performance levels in seven of the seventeen measures for the 3rd Quarter. In 2006 Georgia was the lowest in unemployment duration in the Nation. The annual report is being completed now for 2006.

Summer Work Experience – The Department appreciates the partnerships with all Areas with the summer program which allows youth to work and earn money during the summer.

Internships – The Department just concluded its internship program for this year. The Department had 75 youth, who were either graduating seniors or college students, working in the Career Centers or the Voc Rehab offices.

Minimum Wage Increase – Minimum Wages increased from \$5.25 to \$5.85 and is going up to \$7.25 by 2010.

Questions/Comments of Linda -

Q: Where are we at this point regarding spending? What is DOL's position on local spending? How can areas be more aware of where the State stands in regards to spending? What is the definition of obligated funds?

A: There really isn't a major problem with spending in Georgia. Obligations are funds you have obligated through executed contracts, agreements or MOUs. The only real issue is the tendency to hold onto DLW funds in case of unforeseen major layoffs, which causes a delicate balance in terms of obligating all money. Spending is monitored at the State level and areas should be reporting spending at local board meetings. Areas can send money back to the State or to other local areas that are in need of additional funds. Deobligated funds usually have been at the local level for two years and on the third year the funds come back to the State and are redistributed to other areas in need. Normally the State is not at risk of losing money and has not lost any money.

Q: Are you saying that deobligated funds that are returned to the State are then redistributed to other local areas?

A: Yes, to other areas that have spent their funds. Last year the Directors voted that the money went specifically to certain areas so there is some flexibility.

Q: Inaudible question regarding advocacy suggestions.

A: The thing that a lot of areas are doing right now is engaging local elected, State and Federal officials in terms of coming to their area. During the State's Federal Review, the reviewers went to Gwinett County, to both the Norcross Center and the Career Center. They were raving about the setup and the State, so don't assume that everyone is aware of what we have. Find ways to share youth and adult successes - Burrell just had a Youth Celebration. Issuing reports doesn't get the word out. As far as the Federal Review, Mary Margaret's staff did a good job and the Feds attended their board meeting and were

very impressed. Get the message out. You can't have enough press coverage of the things that you do.

Q: Is the rescission '05 & '06?

A: '05 Funds - It is drawn from '05 & '06 carryover funds that have been carried into 2007.

Q: Does the State of Georgia have any money to rescind?

A: We don't have any at the State level that will be rescinded – No.

Q: Is there any attempt to get a true unemployment statistic for the State that goes beyond those that are collecting unemployment?

A: This has been a major discussion. Obviously the system only tracks the ones that are receiving benefits. A lot of people who are no longer receiving and are no longer coming into the office are not counted. How do you reach these individuals if you don't have access and connections to them? It is something that needs to occur but I don't know of a mechanism to do that and whether there is something underway from a State perspective to try devise a system to do so. It has been a discussion nationally but she's unaware of any current discussions or activities to make it happen but she will check on it.

Workforce Conference – To be held December 5 – 7, 2007, in Savannah.

Chairman Jones announced that DOL is waiting to hear from us on conference planning.

State Workforce Investment Board Update

Mark Musik sent his regrets for not being able to attend because of a conflict with the ACT meeting in Washington and he hopes to see everyone at the annual meeting in December.

Debra Lyons presented a four minute video for Work Ready and the tool kits that will be mailed out to local areas within the next week or so will include the DVD and a version of the presentation that Areas can use. The message out there is to really focus on the business community. When areas receive the presentation they will actually be able to change the front template to their organization's information and present it to local businesses.

Q: Is there a road map that, for instance Tyco developed, of how the whole process was developed with them.

A: They will be developing a road map after meeting with the businesses at the HR Summit in the fall. There will be businesses there that will be conducting presentations on how they did it. Some will be talking about hiring, some will be talking about communicating with education and getting the levels out there that they need and others will be talking about their existing workforce training.

Q: Has there been any development on looking into whether or not this can be a credential.

A: Discussions have taken between Linda and Debra and there has been some discussion with ACT. She will be having more discussions with Linda because they feel it is a good time to sit down and really talk it through

Q: Is the Governor going to require that all State employees be tested?

A: This is a voluntary initiative but there are people from the Georgia Merit System that have trouble hiring people. They are looking at how they can use this tool and it would help the counties.

Q: Are tech schools testing their entering students or graduating students?

A: A lot of colleges are testing their graduated students. They are the one that did the 350 talent assessments and a lot of those are their students.

Q: Is it going to be required or voluntary?

A: It's all voluntary. In Baldwin they had 91 graduating students that volunteered to take the test. Eighty-nine made at least a bronze level and two didn't. Two were at a platinum level. The test is free for graduating seniors.

Q: Who is providing the free testing for the high school seniors? Is the free testing for high school seniors going to be through WIA or just tech schools?

A: It's paid for with discretionary funds and the technical colleges go to the schools with paper and pencil versions and give it. The certificates are mailed directly to the students.

Q: How long does the assessment take and are there preparation materials that can be used by individuals to get prepared?

A: The colleges have brochures or they can go online and do some practice. If they're high school seniors they work with the technical colleges to get it within work ready. It has to be done through the technical colleges to get it at no cost and to be counted.

It takes three hours to complete. If the test is done online you get 53 minutes for each session. You get 45 minutes if done by paper and pencil.

- New Georgia – One of the things that the Commission for a New Georgia talked about is the fact that we do not have connectivity among our resources – the ability to connect things better together more. So between the Chambers and all of the different state agencies in Georgia that we're connecting through work ready and the work ready regions we actually branded them together under one logo – Georgia at Work. You can use this logo in association with your current logo in a way of showing all the things being connected together.

Q: Who is the contact person should problems be raised by a customer?

A: The first person to contact is the VP's of Economic Development. Also email Debra and Fred and they can go to the Commissioner and resolve problems.

- County Data – County data is not live yet but in the next 30 days it should be. All team leaders should have been emailed the link. You click on your county and the number of certificates is highlighted. On the map the green areas are the certified work ready communities in progress. Data is being collected statewide even for counties that have not signed up yet. There have been ten counties that have signed up since the regions came out.

Q: The link is now in the process of being forwarded to team leaders so when will it be ready for others to have access to it?

A: Probably August 15th it will still be a hidden link but it will be made accessible to those working on it in Georgia. The delay is to make certain that there are good numbers on it before making it a live link. Once it becomes a live link it also means the media has access to it. Reports will be updated monthly. Regions don't exclude counties who are not work ready counties.

Additional Q & A with Linda

Q: How successful has Georgia been with signing WRIS agreement?

A: Agreement still hasn't been signed. A draft agreement has been put together related to some neighboring states.

Other Business

Next State WIB Meeting - It will be held on September 20 at the Governor's mansion. These meeting have to be public under the open meetings law. Since it's at the Governor's mansion and anyone planning to attend should notify Debra Lyon's office and she'll get clearance for your attendance. Only place these meetings are posted is on their website. The Board has plans to invite a representative to attend each meeting to discuss what's going on in local areas.

Mary Margaret added that, through a conference call with the Executive Committee of the State Board, a request was made to have a WIB representative come to each State Board meeting, starting in November, and present a 15-20 minute update about activities in local areas relating to the strategic plan and to share success stories and to be "real" and speak their mind.

Chairman Jones stressed the need to check the website for upcoming dates because the squeaky wheel gets the grease. Carol Rayburn will check the website and email everyone with the next meeting date. Chairman Jones announced that Wendell Dallas was named Vice-Chair and he has background in the system.

Trade Reauthorization Update – In the trade reauthorization they are expanding Trade to the service industry so that a lot of people will be covered. They also want to set up a duplicate service delivery system outside of WIA. There are some other things such as health and transitional benefits, establishing new economy scholarships. Emily did express a lot of concern that if it had momentum and she was fearful that it was going to proceed through if people didn't act and get their opinions out about what is happening. It is moving ahead of WIA Reauthorization. Everyone was encouraged to take a look at it and make our positions known.

Next Meeting – To be held in conjunction with the State Conference Chairman Jones suggested that committee meetings be held on Wednesday, December 5th from 3:30 until 5:00 and have the full Board and Annual Dinner that evening at 7:00 p.m. Breakfast with the Commissioner will be held on Thursday, December 6th and all Directors and WIB Chairs are invited to attend. If there's a need to meet again before the end of the conference, this schedule should allow enough time to do so.

A motion and a second was made to accept the times and dates as presented. There were no opposing votes and the motion carried by voice vote.

Second Annual Array Darden Award – People should be thinking about nominations. They are working on a timeline for the nomination process and the selection process. A plaque will be presented at the Dinner on the 5th. Pam Teague and Carlton Burroughs volunteered to serve on the selection committee as the GWLA representatives. Jackie suggested purchasing a one-page ad in the Georgia Workforce Conference Booklet which identifies GWLA, the Award and to highlight Carol as the first recipient of the award.

Linda – Carol will find out next week who she needs to be working with regarding space for the GWLA Committee meeting on the 5th. She reminded everyone of the energy summit being held in Biloxi, Mississippi, in October. Roberta is working closing with Georgia Power around a lot of the energy sector jobs and that partnership.

Chairman Jones announced that Tom Gillin, from Union County, was named to serve on the TBA Board and Jimmy Talent was named to serve on the Southern Company Board.

SETA Conference - Will be held September 16 – 19, at the Omni Hotel, in Atlanta. Georgia and the local workforce areas are serving as host for that and everyone was encouraged to attend. The highlight will be on Tuesday with a tour of the Georgia Aquarium and a reception following the tour.

Adjournment

There was no further business to come before the Board and a motion was made to adjourn.